



## **District Export Councils (DECs)** ***A Resource for Small Business Constituents***

### **WHAT IS A DEC?**

[District Export Councils \(DECs\)](#) are organizations comprised of international trade experts from the local business community whose knowledge and experience provide a key resource for local firms interested in boosting their exports. Currently, there are 58 local DEC's covering nearly every region in the United States ready to share best practices and advice on how to better compete in the global market.

Each local DEC includes around 30 experts from all sectors of the international trade spectrum, including customs and logistics, international marketing, trade finance, manufacturing, and local government. Members are nominated by the United States Secretary of Commerce, and DEC's are chaired by the Department of Commerce's (DOC) local Commercial Service (CS) Export Assistance Center Director. The DEC's are organized through an elected [National Steering Committee](#), which coordinates the national strategy and priority objectives for the DEC's.

DEC members are unpaid volunteers and they work closely with the DOC on initiatives aimed to promote United States exports. They play an important role in educating small businesses and communicating the importance of increasing exports.

### **DEC MISSION AND PURPOSE**

The DEC's mission is to support export promotion efforts by counseling businesses on the international trade process and conducting education and community outreach. Each local DEC plans and coordinates events specific for their region's businesses, including education events, webinars, trade shows, and other activities. In addition, the DEC's hold an annual conference to discuss current issues, best practices and future strategy. The [2012 DEC National Conference](#) will be held on October 16 in Washington, DC.

### **COORDINATING WITH YOUR LOCAL DEC**

Working with your local DEC provides a great opportunity to build relationships with the small businesses and exporters in your district, while taking concrete steps to help them grow and create jobs. Further, these relationships offer important resources to help you better understand international trade issues important to your district. Members of Congress may wish to introduce their local businesses to DEC's, participate in DEC events, or partner in offering education to small firms interested in exporting.

To find your local DEC, please visit their website at: <http://www.districtexportcouncil.com> or contact the local CS Export Assistance Center Executive Secretary (shown below). When reaching out to these organizations, Andy Karellas (202-225-5821), professional staff at the Small Business Committee, can help you identify and connect with the appropriate person (list updated 9/12/12).

<b>DEC</b>	<b>Executive Secretary</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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